

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 INR-07 PM-03 SS-15 PA-02 PRS-01 MC-02

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FM AMCONSUL FUKUOKA

TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 0442

COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA

COMFLEACT SASEBO JA

UNCLAS FUKUOKA 00042

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MARR, PINT, JA

SUB: MORE IN NISHI NIHON SHIMBUN ABOUT ALLEGED REVERSION

OF FLEACTS, SASEBO

SUMMARY: APRIL 3 EDITION OF NISHI NIHON SHIMBUN AGAIN HAD AS ITS
LEAD STORY PREDICTION OF REVERSION OF ALMOST ALL FLEET ACTIVITIES,
SASEBO, OPERATION. STORY SAYS BECAUSE OF REVERSION OF TETEGAMI
PIER AND SHIP REPAIR FACILITY, U.S. AIRCRAFT CARRIERS AND NUCLEAR
POWERED SUBMARINES WILL NO LONGER CALL AT SASEBO, END SUMMARY.
ALTHOUGH NOTHING APPEARED IN LOCAL EDITIONS OF ASAHI, MAINICHI,
OR YOMIURI, LEAD ARTICLE IN MORNING EDITION OF NISHI NIHON SHIMBUN
FEATURED, AS DID MARCH 23 EDITION, DETAILED STORY OF ALLEGED

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REVERSION OF MUCH OF FLEET ACTIVITIES, SASEBO, AND IMPLICATIONS
THEREOF. STORY SAID THAT DEFENSE AGENCY AND DFAA ARE HAVING
INFORMAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH AMERICAN SIDE. STORY QUOTED DFAA
SOURCES AS SAYING THAT REVERSION WOULD MEAN ALMOST COMPLETE
CESSATION OF FUNCTION OF SASEBO AS U.S. NAVAL BASE.

STORY SAID NUMBER ONE DRYDOCK WOULD BE REVERTED TO SASEBO HEAVY
INDUSTRIES, WHILE NUMBER TWO DRYDOCK WOULD GO TO MSDF. STORY
CONTINUED THAT NUMBER TWO DRYDOCK MIGHT BE USED JOINTLY WITH
U.S. NAVY. ARTICLE SAYS CALLS BY NUCLEAR POWERED SUBMARINES
AND AIRCRAFT CARRIERS WILL BECOME IMPOSSIBLE AFTER REVERSION.

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REASON, ARTICLE CONTINUES, IS THAT SPECIAL SAFEGUARDS NEEDED

FOR NUCLEAR POWERED SUBMARINES AND LARGE CREWS OF CARRIERS MEAN THAT CALLS WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE BECAUSE OF LACK OF FACILITIES AND OR LABOR FORCE TO DRIVE TUGS AND PROVIDE LOGISTICAL SUPPORT. ARTICLE SAYS THAT U.S. MILITARY HAS STRONGLY INSISTED THAT THEY BE ALLOWED TO USE FACILITIES IN THE CASE OF EMERGENCY, BUT THAT IN FACT, ONLY SHIPS SUCH AS DESTROYERS COULD ACTUALLY DO SO.

ARTICLE QUOTED SASEBO MAYOR ICHIZO TSUJI AS SAYING THAT HE HAD EXPECTED REVERSION BECAUSE OF LARGE NUMBER OF RIFS IN PAST FEW MONTHS. HE SAID IT IS NATURAL THAT CALLS BY AIRCRAFT CARRIERS

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AND NUCLEAR-POWERED SUBS WOULD END. FINALLY, ARTICLE QUOTED SECRETARY GENERAL OF SASEBO DISTRICT COUNCIL OF LABOR UNIONS AS SAYING HE WELCOMED CESSATION OF CALLS BY CARRIERS AND NUCLEAR-POWERED SUBS, BUT THAT CITIZENS MUST FIGHT REVERSION TO MSDF AND JOINT-USE PURPOSES.

RICHARDSON

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